

R E M A R K S

Since previously withdrawn method claims 15, 16, 18, 19 and 21 have now received an action on the merits, they are not designated "(withdrawn)" in the above listing of claims.

In view of the indicated allowability of the subject matter of claims 9, 11, 14 and 21, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate all the recitals of claim 9; claim 11 has been rewritten in independent form to incorporate all the recitals of previous claim 1; claim 14 has been made dependent on currently amended claim 1; and claim 15 has been amended to incorporate all the recitals of claims 18, 19 and 21. Claims 9, 18, 19 and 21 have been cancelled as redundant in view of these amendments. In addition, new claims 22 - 27, dependent on now-independent claim 11 but otherwise respectively corresponding to claims 2, 3, 4, 9, 10 and 13, have been presented. Since this Amendment does not increase either the total number of claims or the number of independent claims beyond that previously paid for, no additional fee is necessary.

Thus, the claims now in the application are claim 1 (independent; amended to be identical in scope to previous claim 9); claims 2 - 4, 10, 13 and 14 (dependent on amended claim 1); claim 11 (independent; amended to include all recitals of previous claim 1); claims 22 - 27 (dependent on amended claim 11); claim 15 (independent; amended to be identical in scope to previous claim 21); and claim 16 (dependent on amended claim 15).

With reference to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite, attention is respectfully directed to applicants' specification at p. 4, lines 27-29. As there set forth, "the anodic film is sometimes found to be thinner after application of the pretreatment **but never disappears altogether**" (emphasis added). In other words, the anodic oxide

layer does not completely react with "the coating that reacts chemically with the oxide film" and therefore never completely disappears. This being so, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims are properly clear and definite so as to satisfy the requirements of §112, second paragraph, without need for amendment in this regard.

Applicants therefore further submit that amended independent claims 1, 11 and 15, respectively corresponding to previous dependent claims 9, 11 and 21 but rewritten to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, are now allowable, as is claim 14, now dependent on independent allowable claim 1; and that the remaining claims are likewise allowable by virtue of their dependence on one or another of the allowable independent claims.

For the foregoing reasons, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is accordingly courteously requested.

Respectfully,

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I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited this date with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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